



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS



PRESS RELEASE

Date: July 30, 2015
Contact: Grace Fisher
Phone: (601)359-5608
Email: gfisher@mdoc.state.ms.us

Counties Agree to Keep State Inmates in Work Program without Payment

JACKSON - More than a dozen counties have agreed to continue using state inmates in a work program without reimbursement from the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

The department plans to phase out the current Joint State County Work Program starting Saturday.

In addition to following MDOC's rules and regulations and no longer receiving \$20 per day per offender, each county also must provide alcohol and drug treatment and GED programs to all inmates in the program at the county's expense. MDOC still will provide and pay for medical care for inmates.

Currently, sheriffs in 14 counties have signed a memorandum of understanding. The counties are Carroll, Chickasaw, Clay, Jefferson, Lauderdale, Lincoln, Monroe, Montgomery, Pearl River, Scott, Simpson, Stone, Tate and Union. A total of 30 counties participated in the JSCWP.

Sheriffs who have signed the agreement want additional offenders. However, because of fewer eligible inmates, MDOC can't quickly grant the requests.

Inmates in counties without agreements will be moved to the state's community work centers.

"We are no longer operating as status quo," Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. "Detractors should anticipate a different way of doing business at MDOC."

Ending the current program allows MDOC to redirect \$3.2 million to other budgetary needs.

Fisher, in his first year as commissioner, plans to make more changes as he assesses the agency's operations. "We are in the initial throes of a sea change," he said. "If the current trend of having fewer inmates incarcerated and more on community supervision continues, we must rethink how we are using taxpayer's money."

#####